

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee was held on Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at 4:30 pm in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Chair Bernie Erickson, Joan Brusky, Kerry Metoxen, Duane Pierce, Jason Habeck, Ed Koslowski
EXCUSED: Louise Dahlke

1. Call Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 4:30 pm.

2. Approve/Modify Agenda.

Motion made by Joan Brusky, seconded by Ed Koslowski to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. Approve/Modify Minutes of November 20, 2018.

Motion made by Joan Brusky, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. Budget Status Financial Report for October 2018 – Unaudited.

Chair Erickson noted the balance remaining at the end of the year will be carried forward into 2019 and, in addition, there will be \$1,000 added to the account by the County. CVSO Jerry Polus added that there was recently a small deposit made which were proceeds from the company store in his office.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Ed Koslowski to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. Update re: Honor Rewards Program.

Polus informed 316 veterans have received Honor Rewards cards and there are currently 81 businesses participating in the program. He said after he retires, he and Erickson can go out and solicit more businesses.

6. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.

Polus informed Joe Aulik has been hired to be the new CVSO upon Polus's retirement. This will be confirmed by the County Board on December 19, 2018 and Aulik is scheduled to hit the floor running on January 21, 2019. Polus said Aulik started as a CVSO in Kewaunee County and then took the CVSO job in Winnebago County. He has about 20 years of experience and Polus feels he will do a very good job in Brown County. Joan Brusky asked why there is a gap from the time Polus retires until Aulik starts and it was explained that Aulik's County Executive asked him to give a longer notice period than the typical two weeks. Aulik will be attending Veterans Recognition Subcommittee meetings in the future as the CVSO and Polus intends to stay on the subcommittee as well.

Koslowski noted he sat on the selection committee for Polus's replacement and said that County Executive Troy Streckenbach did a very good job of selecting the representatives of area veterans groups for the selection committee. There was representation from DAV, American Legion, VFW and Amvets and there was good input from those involved. Koslowski noted that the benefits secured for veterans by the CVSOs bring a great amount of revenue into the community and there were only a few candidates that could provide a number for that economic impact. Polus said last year about \$105 million dollars was brought into the County in the form of benefits to veterans. The three main categories that make up that amount are compensation for disabilities, pension and health care.

Polus concluded by saying that he took part in the Wreaths Across America event over the weekend by putting wreaths on graves at Woodlawn Cemetery. Pierce added that his Rolling Thunder chapter also participated in Wreaths Across America by putting wreaths on cemeteries in Freedom.

7. Report from Committee Members present (Erickson, Brusky, Corry, Dahlke, Haskins, Koslowski, Metoxen, Pierce).

-Brusky asked if any thank you notes were sent to businesses and organizations that donated prizes for the Fair. Erickson informed that he has asked County Board staff to create some sort of certificate that can be used for that and he asked that Brusky provide him with a list of places that made donations so certificates can be made for them. He also indicated certificates will be made up for those that donated to the Honor Flight of Champions.

Brusky also said she attended a tailgate party at the Veterans Manor on Sunday which was very nice. She enjoyed seeing the facility and visiting with the veterans and noted the event was attended by Santa as well.

-Koslowski said he recently had an opportunity to see the new veterans' facility off Main Street near Fleet Farm. It is a very nice 17 bed facility and there is also one room dedicated to a counseling area. He will be starting a Facebook page for the facility and will be soliciting donations from area veterans groups. This facility is quite different than the Veterans Manor in that it is more of a transitional facility for veterans while getting back on their feet while the Veterans Manor provides more long term housing.

-Metoxen noted that the \$105 million dollars of benefit to the community Polus talked about earlier does not include what he does in Outagamie and Brown County. He added that all retro checks go towards Polus' figures. He also said he was happy with the selection of Joe Aulik to take Polus' position and said he will do a good job.

-Pierce noted Amvets will be holding a meet raffle at 2:00 pm at Shoots on January 12 and he encouraged everyone to attend. He also mentioned that the traveling wall will be coming to Manitowoc September 12 – 15, 2019 and he will keep this group updated of details as they are finalized. Finally, Pierce said next May in Washington DC may be the last time Rolling Thunder does their big ride due to costs and some government issues; although he read recently that the Amvets stepped up and indicated they may cover some of the costs to keep the ride going. He said Rolling Thunder has about 12,000 – 15,000 members and consistently brings at least a million people into Washington DC on that weekend which is a huge economic impact.

-Habeck talked about the Military Appreciation Night the Gamblers held recently. They had the biggest crowd ever, including 50 Purple Heart recipients. Of the 5200 fans in attendance, about 3000 of them were veterans. In addition, 110 individuals took their military oaths on the ice at halftime during an enlistment ceremony. They raised about \$40,000 which brings the total donated to veterans over the past seven years to \$158,000. Habeck noted next year's event will be held on December 14 which is about the time the National Guard troop should be coming home and there will be special events to honor them. He also talked about the event they held at Ariens Hill for the National Guard unit that is being employed. They had 200 families participate and families ice skated, visited with Santa, had their pictures taken and enjoyed cookies and cocoa.

-Erickson recalled at the last meeting there was a discussion as to where to hold the Veterans Breakfast that Habeck is involved in because the current Arena and Shopko Hall will be demolished. He said he has talked to the Museum about hosting the event there in their meetings rooms. Erickson will check out the space to see if it will work and noted that there should not be a large cost to use the facility and there is plenty of ample parking.

8. Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law.

Jason Habeck expressed interest in becoming a permanent member of this Subcommittee. All at the meeting were in favor of him joining the group and he was welcomed.

9. Adjourn.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Kerry Metoxen to adjourn at 5:08 pm. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Following the meeting, cake was served in honor of Jerry Polus's last meeting due to his retirement on January 4, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Administrative Specialist